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A Proclamation ... for restitution of goods lately taken on the Seas.

Elizabeth I

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By the Queene.

A Proclamation to be published in Cornewall, Deuonshire, Dorcetshire and Hampshire, for restitution of goods lately taken on the Seas from the Subjects of the King of Spayne by way of Reprisall.



Hereas by order from the Queenes most excellent Maiestie diuers ships of warre set forth this last Sommer by the Citie of London, to ioyne in consort with her Maiesties Fleete and others, vnder the conduct of the Lord Thomas Howard, haue taken sundry prizes of Spanish ships comming from the West Indies freight with Merchandises and good commodities of sundry sorts: The which prizes the Captaines of the sayd London ships, haue not directly brought home to the said port of London, as they should and might haue done, the winde seruing thereunto, but into other remote ports and hauens of this Realme, with purpose (as should seeme) to take oportunitie of such distant places for the rifling of the said prizes and the enriching of themselues and contrary to all right and the trust reposed in them, the sayd Captaines Masters and Maryners of the said London shippes, going vpon wages, haue taken out and embezelled diuers parcels of the goods and commodities laden within the said ships and the same haue sold and exchanged to sundry persons dwelling within the said port Townes and other adiacent places thereto to the great slander and preiudice of Sea discipline and wrong to the aduenturers by whom they were employed.

The Queenes most excellent Maiestie, not willing to suffer so great a disorder nor so great a wrong

and iniustice to be done towards her selfe and other her Subjects the Aduenturers in the said Fleete, doth straightly charge and command, that al such persons as haue bought, exchanged, or haue any waies receiued of any maner person, directly or indirectly, out of the said London Fleete, any forreine Coine, Bollyon of God or siluer, Jewels, Pearles, Stones, Muske, Wrought or rawe silke, Cochenelia, Indico, or any other marchandizes, commodities or things whatsoever, or that shall haue in their possession any of the goods of the aforesaid natures: shall presently after the publication of this Proclamation, or within tenne dayes next following, bring in a true particular note in writing of the same, with the seuerall prizes what they paid, and the names of whom the same was bought, or tokens deciphring the person and persons, as neere sa they can remember, and the day, time and place, where and when the same was bought, exchanged, or receiued, and foorth of what Shippe or Prize the same was brought (as neere as they can call to remembrance) to Sir Francis Drake Knight, the Maior of Plymmouth Christopher Harris, or any two of them, being Commissioners appoynted by her Maiestie for the receiuing of any such goods in Plymmouth: And for goods taken neere Dartmouth and Totnes, to be brought to Sir John Gilbert, and the Maiors of the same Townes: And of any goods about Exceter, to bee brought to the Maior there, and Sir Robert Dennis: And of goods about Southampton and Portesmouth, to be brought to any of the Maiors there, and Sir Thomas West, and Thomas Henslow, or any two of them. And in case any that hath so bought, exchanged or receiued of any of thesaid Captaines, Masters or Mariners, or others of the said Fleete any such treasure, commoditie or thing (as is abouesaid) and doe not bring in and deliuer a particular note of the same in writing with the seuerall prices they payd, and the names of whom the same was bought, with the day, time, and place, where, when, and forth of what Ship or Prize the same was bought, and deliuer or cause to bee deliuered the same within the time, and according as before is seuerally specified and inioyned to the saide Commissioners aboue named, shall bee held, and taken as Felons and Abbettors to Pyrats, and to be proceeded against, as in case of Felonie is accustomed to be done by the Lawes of this Realme.

Given at our Palace of Westminster the nine and twentieth day of December, in the foure and thirtieth yeere of our Raigne. 1591.

God saue the Queene.

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excellent Maiestie.

